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EXAMINER

AHMED, HASAN SYED

ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
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1618

MAIL DATE	DELIVERY MODE
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PAPER

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

The time period for reply, if any, is set in the attached communication.

DETAILED ACTION

Receipt is acknowledged of applicant's amendment and response, which was filed on 5 December 2007.

* * * * *

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

Claims 1-3, 17-19, 21-23, and 25 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the written description requirement. The claims contain subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to reasonably convey to one skilled in the relevant art that the inventor, at the time the application was filed, had possession of the claimed invention.

As amended, the instant claim set recites the limitations "inner spaces" and "reservoir". After carefully examining the instant disclosure, the examiner respectfully submits that support for these limitations is lacking and the addition of said limitations is new matter. Specifically, the limitations "inner spaces" and "reservoir" are not set forth in the instant specification. The specification, including paragraphs [0032], [0033], and [0050], have been carefully reviewed and sufficient support for the limitations "inner spaces" and "reservoir" were not found.

* * * * *

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

A person shall be entitled to a patent unless –

(a) the invention was known or used by others in this country, or patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country, before the invention thereof by the applicant for a patent.

Claims 1, 2, 17-19, 21-23, and 25 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(a) as being anticipated by WO 2003/026532 (“Weber”).

Weber discloses a medical article comprising a release region (see page 2, lines 22-28), further comprising:

- the polymeric carrier comprising a first polymer of instant claim 1 (see page 8, lines 5-15);
- the drug loaded nanoparticles dispersed within the polymeric carrier of instant claim 1 (see page 11, lines 14-16);
- the layered silicate material (phyllosilicate) of instant claim 1 (see page 9, line 4);
- the hydrophilic therapeutic agent of instant claim 2 (see page 11, line 17 – page 12, line 6; e.g. acetylsalicylic acid);
- the hydrophobic polymer of instant claim 2 (see page 8, lines 5-15; e.g. polyolefin block copolymer);
- the disposal over at least a portion of the medical article substrate of instant claim 17 (see figure 1);

- the coronary or peripheral vasculature implantable or insertable medical device of instant claim 19 (see page 20, lines 16-21);
- the catheter of instant claim 21 (see page 20, line 19);
- the antithrombotic agent of instant claim 22 (see page 11, line 18);
- the smectite silicate material of instant claim 23 (see page 9, line 4); and
- the method of instant claim 25 (see page 6, lines 3-15).

* * * * *

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

Claims 1 and 3 remain rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Weber in view of U.S. Application No. 2005/0149175 ("Hunter").

Weber teaches a medical article comprising a release region (see above). The disclosed article comprises the polyolefin-polyvinylaromatic block copolymer of instant claim 3 (see page 8, lines 5-15).

Weber explains that the disclosed invention, "...advantageously provides the opportunity to provide a variation in one or more properties within one or more dimensions of the inventive device than can be achieved in medical devices not comprising nanomaterials." See page 18, lines 25-27.

Weber differs from the instant application in that it does not teach halofuginone as a therapeutic agent. However, use of halofuginone as a therapeutic agent in vascular medical devices was well known in the art at the time the instant application was filed, as evinced by Hunter (see paragraph 0415).

It would have been obvious to a person of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to disclose a vascular medical device comprising a release region, further comprising a polymeric carrier and nanoparticles comprising halofuginone, as taught by Weber in view of Hunter. One of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made would have been motivated to make such a composition because it provides more flexibility in properties than medical devices not comprising nanomaterials, as explained by Weber.

* * * * *

Response to Arguments

Applicant's arguments filed on 5 December 2007 have been fully considered but they are not persuasive.

35 USC 102(a)

Applicant argues that, "[t]he Webber reference fails as an anticipatory reference because it fails to teach...the claimed drug loaded nanoparticles wherein the first therapeutic agent is structurally associated with the silicate particles in that the first therapeutic agent occupies inner spaces between adjacent layers of the silicate material of each silicate particle to form a reservoir for the first therapeutic agent. See remarks, page 7.

Examiner respectfully submits that applicants argument is moot since the amendment to claim 1 is deemed to be new matter (see 35 USC 112 rejection, above).

* * *

35 USC 103(a)

Applicant argues that, “[g]iven the amendments to independent claim 1...Applicant states that the rejection fails at least because of the fundamental defects discussed above with respect to the anticipation rejection of claim 1 discussed above and these defects are not remedied by the secondary reference (Hunter).” See remarks, page 8.

Examiner respectfully submits that applicants argument is moot since the amendment to claim 1 is deemed to be new matter (see 35 USC 112 rejection, above).

* * * * *

Conclusion

THIS ACTION IS MADE FINAL. Applicant is reminded of the extension of time policy as set forth in 37 CFR 1.136(a).

A shortened statutory period for reply to this final action is set to expire THREE MONTHS from the mailing date of this action. In the event a first reply is filed within TWO MONTHS of the mailing date of this final action and the advisory action is not mailed until after the end of the THREE-MONTH shortened statutory period, then the shortened statutory period will expire on the date the advisory action is mailed, and any extension fee pursuant to 37 CFR 1.136(a) will be calculated from the mailing date of

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the advisory action. In no event, however, will the statutory period for reply expire later than SIX MONTHS from the mailing date of this final action.

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Correspondence

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to HASAN S. AHMED whose telephone number is (571)272-4792. The examiner can normally be reached on 9am - 5:30pm.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Michael G. Hartley can be reached on (571)272-0616. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.

/H. S. A./
Examiner, Art Unit 1618

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/Humera N. Sheikh/

Primary Examiner, Art Unit 1618